

STATINTL



Jack Kofoed Says

Skid Row Denizens Need Shelter Houses

SKID ROW in any city is smelly, dirty, alcoholic and hopeless. I first saw one many years ago in Philadelphia around Eighth and Vine Sts., where future Skid Rowers got their start in burlesque houses, saloons and bordellos. I saw more along New York's Bowery. Here in Miami I came closer because I have helped, in small ways, so many of its denizens.

Municipal Judge Milton Wallace recently suggested closing flop houses would be a start toward eliminating chronic alcoholism and vagrancy. Closing dirty, flea infested joints, without supplying a substitute, would compel broken men to sleep in the open. I've seen many teeth chattering, shivering fellows after bad nights.

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FLOP HOUSES stink. But, unless Miami builds shelters to replace their blots on the town, we merely make a lousy situation worse. When I read Judge Wallace's blast at the joints, it concerned no suggestion of municipally operated sleep spots. In a letter to the editor of The Herald, the judge went into that point. With it I agree completely.

We have had a Skid Row for more than the 25 years I've been here. I never heard of anyone in local government making an effort toward cleaning it up. Skid boys get drunk, are picked up, given 10, 20 or 30 days in the stockade. They are released, accumulate

a few dollars, sloop up more cheap booze, and are returned to jail. It is a wasteful, stupid routine for which commissioners, judges, and everyone else, must accept blame.

Perhaps something will be done about municipal lodging houses. If so, make sure of one thing. Build them before eliminating the flop house. I was not "complacent" in asking where the gutter boys would sleep if there were not flop houses, but more concerned about their plight than officials who have paid no attention to the problem at all.

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FORMER Borough President of Manhattan Hulan Jack was accused of misdoings while in office, and resigned his \$25,000 a year job. Recently Jack worked as a clerk to fill out time required for a \$75 a week pension from the city. Arguments have developed about that, some contending, in light of what he had done, the former borough president should not collect a pension. This is nonsense. The man worked for the city over a long period of years, paid his share into the pension fund, and is entitled to its benefits.

It is too bad that, in light of the Negro's battle for equality such prominent members of the race as Jack, Sonny Liston and others, create an image in the mind of the or

sition that is by no means helpful.

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AFTER Allan Dulles moved out as head of the Central Intelligence Agency, it was assumed the very sensitive bureau had been reorganized, and bloopers and boo-boos would become less common. Apparently this hasn't happened.

President Kennedy said "hard evidence" about missiles in Cuba did not reach him until Oct. 13th of last year, though a good deal of evidence seemed to have been accumulated long before. CIA's estimate of the situation on the surface at least seems to have been as inaccurate as its belief before the Bay of Pigs episode that once an invasion force landed, Castro's militia would mutiny, and labor unions would call a general strike. Wouldn't you think a Congressional committee would find it more fruitful to discover why than to probe into professional football players betting on games?

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